**Demurrage Paid by Ports**

1829. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Port's storage capacity is very less and the ships bringing oil/diesel from other countries have to wait for months for discharging their cargo resulting in payment of huge sums as demurrage;

(b) if so, what has been the average waiting period for such ships during the last six months;

(c) the amount of demurrage paid by exchequer during the above period; and

(d) the steps taken to end congestion and increase storage capacity at ports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Rajya Sabha.

**Maintenance of National Highways in Tamil Nadu**

1830. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state the amount spent on maintenance of National Highways during the last three years in Tamil Nadu and the amount earmarked for this purpose for the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): The following amounts have been spent on maintenance of National Highways in Tamil Nadu during the last three years:—

Rs. in lakhs

| Year | Allocation |
|---|---|
| 1995-96 | 1789.94 |
| 1996-97 | 2413.14 |
| 1997-98 | 2981.37 |

A sum of Rs. 2720 lakhs have been earmarked for maintenance during the current financial year 1998-99.

**Construction of New Ports**

1831. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to invite bids for 11 port projects which will create an additional cargo handling capacity of 34 million tonnes;

(b) if so, the names of these projects;

(c) the time by when bids will be invited; and

(d) the total estimated amount of investment thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Invitation of bids for port projects is a continuing process and the respective Port Trusts invite bids for the individual project or a group of projects from time to time. However, there is no package of 11 port projects contributing to 34 million tonnes of capacity in the Major Ports.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

**Four Laning of Ncelamanpla-Tumkur Section of National Highway-4**

1832. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to have four laning of the 45 kilometre Neelamanpla-Tumkur Section of National Highway-4;

(b) if so, the amount of money likely to be spent thereon; and

(c) the time by when work in this regard will start?